SUBSTITUTE PAGE 11,

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FIG. 22 is a flow chart illustrating some of the logical operations involved in the routines that store encrypted card expiration data, and later read such encrypted card expiration data along with PIN data, used to obtain access to the secure compartment of the electronic lock box of FIG. 1.

FIG. 23 is a flow chart illustrating some of the logical operations involved with a "contractor mode" alternative routine for allowing access to the secure compartment of the electronic lock box of FIG. 1.

FIG. 24 is a flow chart illustrating some of the logical operations involved with a "Card Inserted Wake Up" routine for use with the electronic lock box of FIG. 1.

FIG. 25 is a general block diagram of an electronic lock box system, including a central clearinghouse computer, a card reader station, a communication device, and an electronic lock box device.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Reference will now be made in detail to the present preferred embodiment of the invention, an example of which is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein like numerals indicate the same elements throughout the views.

Referring now to the drawings, FIG. 1 illustrates an electronic lock box generally designated by the reference numeral 10, as constructed according to the principles of the present invention. Lock box 10 has an outer housing, including a lower housing portion 20, and an upper housing portion 30, in which the lower housing includes a keypad 222 at a keypad area 24, and the upper housing includes a moveable key compartment door 32. In the keypad area 24, there are multiple individual pushbutton keys 22, and also on the front surface of the keypad area 24, there is a set of indicator lamps 28 that act as an annunciator.

FIGS. 1-7 illustrate the outer portions of lock box 10 in various views, in which the key compartment door 32 is closed. FIG. 8 illustrates lock box 10 in a view in which the key compartment door 32 is open. Referring back to FIG. 1, the upper housing of lock box 10 is illustrated at 212, and includes two receptacles 48 (see FIG. 16) that receive a shackle 40. The shackle 40 has an upper portion 46 and two shackle extensions 164 and 162 that fit through the receptacles 48. The shackle also includes two "rain caps" at 42 and 44 of increased diameter, which also act as mounting stops. In FIG. 1 a key compartment door handle 34 can be seen, which assists a user in opening the key compartment door 32.

Referring now to FIG. 2, the lower housing portion 20 has a right side 26 and a left side 27 (as viewed in FIG. 2). The upper housing portion 30 exhibits a right side 36 and a left side 37 (also as viewed in FIG. 2). An electrical connector 50 is positioned at the bottom of the lock box as viewed in FIG. 2. This is designed to receive a memory card 12 that may also